

Inspection of a good school: St Patrick's Catholic Primary School

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School, Griffin Road, Plumstead, London SE18 7QG

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 January 2023

Outcome

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Parents and carers, including those of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), speak very positively about the school. They emphasise the care and support their children receive. Almost all would recommend it. Pupils like their school. It is calm and friendly. Pupils are kept safe.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils. This can be seen in lots of ways. For example, pupils behave well and take pride in their work. Pupils consistently made significantly above average progress in their end of Year 6 reading and mathematics tests in each of the three years before the pandemic. These strong outcomes also continued last year when tests resumed.

Pupils are taught that bullying is never acceptable. Leaders celebrate the school's faith but also teach pupils the importance of respect and tolerance for others. Incidents of bullying or racism are rare.

Leaders make sure that teachers have high-quality resources to deliver their subjects, for example in music and science. Pupils enjoy the different trips that staff organise for them, speaking enthusiastically about going to the theatre and the seaside. Leaders also encourage a sense of community spirit among pupils, for example by taking part in music events and performances for local groups.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders ensure that pupils study a broad and balanced curriculum. They are ambitious for what they want pupils to achieve. Leaders have reviewed each subject and considered what they want pupils to know and remember. In a few subjects, they are embedding their plans, for example in French.

Pupils of all ages learn to be confident mathematicians. Children in the early years excitedly used 'number fans' to show their understanding in working with numbers up to

10. Older pupils are fluent with their multiplications and use their strong knowledge to show their workings out when they tackle mathematical problems.

Leaders make sure that learning to read starts in the Nursery through the sharing of rhymes and stories, for example. Once children move to Reception, they have dedicated phonics lessons every day. Staff have received training in teaching phonics. That said, some staff do not share the same level of expertise as others. Leaders know who the weakest readers are. They use different ways to support these pupils to catch up, such as regular small-group teaching and one-to-one reading. However, there are occasions when this support is not as effective as it should be. When this happens, a few pupils, including those with SEND, do not practise and embed their phonics knowledge as well as they could.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. In most subjects, teachers explain subject concepts and terminology precisely. In subjects such as science, teachers check pupils' understanding well and help pupils to recall prior learning. Pupils can explain ideas such as permeability with confidence, reflecting on their practical work for example. In a few other subjects, teaching is not as helpful in supporting knowledge to 'stick' in pupils' long-term memory. Sometimes, pupils remember the activities that they took part in rather than the subject knowledge that should have been learned from the activities.

Leaders make sure that teachers know about pupils with SEND. They are also quick to spot when pupils who join the early years may need further support. Teachers use the suggested strategies in pupils' learning plans to adapt their teaching. Leaders regularly review pupils' targets to make sure that they build in more ambition for what pupils can achieve. They work well with external agencies to give pupils access to the expertise that they need to help them.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Leaders support teachers with their management of behaviour. When there is any low-level disruption or a pupil comes off task, it is picked up quickly.

Leaders currently offer seven clubs and activities for pupils to take part in. These are targeted at specific year groups and rotate on a termly basis. Leaders are looking to broaden the offer with the addition of drama and coding clubs. The school's relationships and health education lessons work alongside assemblies to teach pupils about topics such as democracy and how to manage their emotions. Staff emphasise the importance of being kind to one another and knowing right from wrong. This is seen in pupils' positive behaviour and attitudes towards each other.

Staff are proud to work at St Patrick's. They talk very positively about their experiences. Staff feel well supported by senior leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know their community and their families well. They are quick to share information and follow up on any concerns, liaising with external agencies as they need to. Leaders make sure that staff are trained on safeguarding. Staff know how to report concerns and take their roles in relation to pupils' welfare seriously.

Leaders make sure that pupils are taught how to stay safe, including when online. Pupils say that if they had concerns about their safety, they have a trusted adult who they could go to.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, the support given to weaker readers, including those with SEND, is not as effective as it should be. Consequently, some pupils do not practise and embed their phonics knowledge as well as they could. Leaders need to review their support for the weaker readers, ensuring all staff have the highest level of expertise.
- In a few subjects, the knowledge that leaders want pupils to know and remember is not 'sticking' in pupils' long-term memory. Sometimes pupils remember the activities that they took part in rather than the knowledge that underpinned the activity. Leaders need to review how well teaching is helping pupils to embed knowledge into their long-term memory across all parts of the school's curriculum.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2012.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	100173
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	10255502
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	333
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kathy Elliffe
Headteacher	Mary Murphy
Website	www.stpatricksprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	31 October 2017

Information about this school

- The school is a catholic school within the Diocese of Southwark. It had its last section 48 inspection in March 2019.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspector carried out this ungraded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other senior staff. The inspector also held separate meetings and/or telephone calls with representatives from the local governing body, the local authority and the diocese.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, science and music. During each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with leaders,

visited a sample of lessons and spoke to teachers and pupils about their learning. The inspector reviewed samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector also spoke to leaders and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work in other subjects, including geography, art, design and technology, and mathematics.
- The inspector met with leaders with responsibility for safeguarding and behaviour. They reviewed a range of documentation, including pre-employment checks on staff, case studies and behaviour information. The inspector also considered the views of parents, staff and pupils to help evaluate the school's safeguarding arrangements.
- The inspector also considered replies to Ofsted Parent View and the online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Sam Hainey, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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